

THE POTTER COMMITTEE.

Two Important Witnesses Examined Yesterday.

John F. Coyle's Mission to Florida—Instructions from Edward Cooper—Mr. Hewitt's Knowledge of the Cipher—The South Carolina Bargaining—A Local Operator Called to Baltimore.

Flash Light on the Cipher Telegrams.
Mr. John F. Coyle was examined by the Potter committee at its afternoon session yesterday. The witness, in reply to Mr. Reed, stated that he went to Florida during the election of 1876, upon a request made to him by Colonel Patton. He met Colonel Patton at the Elbert House and was taken into a room where he saw Mr. Edward Cooper and Mr. Whitney. "Mr. Cooper gave me my instructions, and also gave me a cipher key," witness was read his dispatches to Henry Havemeyer.

Mr. Reed—State what your instructions were.
Witness—They were very general and very brief. I was to go to Florida and add the Democrats there in obtaining all the evidence that was possible to secure a truthful count, to defray any expenses that were required for that purpose, and to add them in any way I was authorized to employ money, limited in amount by my own judgment and discretion.

Mr. Reed—What limit was put to the method in which you should use money?—A. Every dollar was put to me as used legitimately in procuring witnesses, in paying ordinary expenses that would attend the collection of such evidence, and duplicate returns through the State.

Q. How much did you expend?—A. I expended and authorized the expenditure of nearly \$10,000.

Q. How did you obtain this money?—A. Through drafts on Mr. Cooper. I had been employed by the Democratic committee during the whole campaign, and they manifested their confidence in me by leaving very much to my own judgment.

Q. What conversation took place between you and Mr. Cooper in regard to the cipher?—A. I was sent from the general parlor of the Elbert House to the committee room of the national committee, where I saw Colonel Patton, Mr. Whitney, and Mr. Cooper. Mr. Cooper drew from his pocket the cipher, which I then saw for the first time. It was a horizontal line, but the Tribune has them the other way. The list on page 7 of the Tribune contains the transcription words. There were a few substitutions. Mr. Cooper said that the list was amended after I left. I do not think the entire table on page 7 was given to me. I think it stopped at twenty-five words. I presumed that Mr. Hewitt understood that I had the cipher from the first time I saw it, just before I left. I was in the parlor of the Elbert House, and was on the eve of leaving when Mr. Hewitt came in and introduced me to a gentleman named Whitney, who he said was present at the time the cipher was explained to me, but he took no hand in the explanation.

Q. I see in this list on page 10 of the Tribune the word "No. 23" meant Mr. Edward Cooper. You will see it stated in my dispatch. "I have drawn on No. 23 for \$1,000." I understand that the cipher was enlarged by the addition of the word "No. 23" on the tenth page. One of the clerks in the committee room told me afterward.

Q. What was the name of that clerk?—A. I do not remember his name. He is not a Democrat.

The chairman, on being appealed to, said he must certainly answer the question, unless there was some proper reason for objecting.

Witness—Well, it was Mr. Whitney. The conversation I had with him about it was after the publication of the cipher in the Tribune. Colonel Patton had been interviewed the day before, and had said that he got the cipher from Mr. Cooper. Mr. Whitney told me when he saw that, because, as he said, the Colonel himself had manufactured that part of the cipher and added it to the cipher Mr. Cooper invented.

Mr. Reed—You stated for Florida as soon as you had the cipher given to you?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. Was any suggestion made to you that you should get your ticket for another point, as your mission was a secret one?—A. Yes; I was told to do so by Mr. Cooper. I accordingly took a ticket to Charleston.

Q. And you went to where?—A. I went first to Jacksonville, and from there to Tallahassee, where I stayed for about five weeks.

With regard to the dispatches in the Tribune purporting to be from me, I never saw them. I never saw No. 6, because he was never at Raleigh. Could not tell what the cipher "twenty-eight" meant. He told me he had the key. This was a patch stating: "Supply \$7,000 credit, Woolley and Coyle," was a mistake, as he and Woolley never had any transactions together that required money. The Tribune also published another, which was not in the pamphlet. It was made to say: "Only cash will avail." This had not been sent by him.

Mr. Reed—Did you throw out any danger signals when you arrived at Tallahassee?—A. No, sir.

Q. Were you much scared down there?—A. I did not feel the Florida people should sell out to you?—A. No, sir.

Q. Did Mr. Marble mention his terror to you?—A. No, sir; I do not believe that he did.

Q. State the details of the \$200,000 proposition that was made to you?—A. It was made to me by Mr. Alexander Patton, the gentleman to whom Mr. Hewitt introduced me before I left Washington. He said to me that the returning board could be bought for \$200,000, but I had received no communication from the gentleman to whom I had been introduced in the national committee room, so I paid no attention to him.

Mr. Reed—Sometime in November, 1878, you sent a letter to the New York Herald.—A. I did.

Mr. Reed produced a copy of the Tribune of November 2, in which the letter was published. It commenced: "To the Editor of the New York Herald: In your issue of this morning I regret to find that Mr. Cooper anticipates my interview of last evening with a denial of the fact that he gave me the cipher key to be used in my communications from Florida to the committee. Unpleasant as this is, I find myself compelled to reiterate this fact, and such details of time and place as will certainly refresh his memory, and I trust he will not oblige me by further details to bring into this connection the names of gentlemen who were present, and who are generally well known to the public. The letter then went on to give these details. Witness admitted that he wrote this letter, and testified that the statements therein contained were true and correct.

Mr. Reed then asked that the letter be placed upon the record, but some little objection was raised.

Mr. Stouffer said that if it was accepted he should make a motion that the letter be referred to by Mr. Tilden in the course of his testimony should be placed on the records. He refrained from doing so previously because he did not believe it was evidence.

Mr. Reed—Then why were the Joseph Surface dispatches admitted, where Marble was telling one thing previously to a cipher and telling another thing to the public?

After a short discussion Mr. Reed withdrew the letter.

Mr. Hiseock—State what amount you understood that you were to draw.—A. I understood that I was to draw whatever was requisite to secure a true and faithful count. There was no sum even talked about; it was unlimited. I was simply to draw what was needed to do the work.

Q. Could you have drawn \$50,000?—A. I should have felt justified in drawing for any amount that was necessary. I had previously drawn on the committee for large amounts—four or five hundred dollars. My correspondence was with Colonel Patton, and my drafts were drawn upon Mr. Cooper.

Q. Do you know if Governor Tilden knew anything of these dispatches?—A. Well, my knowledge of Governor Tilden and of the affairs of the canvass would make me positive he did not. I do not know that a considerable number of money was to be raised in New York or anywhere else for the purpose of watching the canvassing boards. I never knew of Marble's dispatch offering the returning board for sale until he saw it in the Tribune. Mr. Woolley once asked me if I had authority to draw any money. I told him I had for legitimate purposes. Mr. Woolley then inquired if I felt authorized to draw a considerable sum—I think he meant to draw \$100,000. Under such circumstances I might be authorized to draw so much, I told him.

Q. Did he say he had sent dispatches asking for authority to draw so large a sum?—A. Yes, he said that he had sent dispatches, but could get no answer.

Q. Did you write the dispatch, "Half twelve may be thirty eleven winning ten dollars." That is addressed from Tallahassee, December 4, to Henry Havemeyer, New York, and signed "Fox"?—A. Mr. Woolley handed it to me to draw. Under such circumstances I might be authorized to draw so much, I told him.

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formed that the board was corrupt through Mr. Dyke, said Mr. Dyke, that he knew about it. I think we should go to the fountain-head and not scatter about the groundless rumors any more than has been helped.

Chairman to witness—You went down there and did lawful work?—A. That is all.

Q. And you drew the money for legitimate purposes only?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. Did you draw a large sum?—A. Yes; \$5,000 or \$5,000.

Q. Did you draw so much at one time?—A. Yes.

Q. Did you have any other propositions made in regard to purchasing the returning board?—A. During my stay in Florida there were several propositions of the same character from several persons, but I always found them to emanate from Mr. Tilden. The town of Tallahassee was full of rumors and full of negotiations. [Laughter.]

Q. On either side?—A. I think so. Was it so, Mr. Chandler?

Mr. William Chandler laughed, but made no reply.

Joseph L. Hanco, a former clerk at the executive chamber in the Capitol, that occupied, and his memory proved so defective that nothing was elicited.

Thomas C. Dunn, a member of the South Carolina returning board, was examined at his own request. He related conversations between himself and Hardy Solomon, who represented that he had been commissioned by the Democratic leaders to purchase the returning board, or a majority of the board. Mr. Dunn said Mr. Solomon came to him during the session of the board. He said to me that he was requested to see members of the returning board, and to see if they would be willing to enter into any negotiation by which the vote of that board could be so shaped as to elect the electoral vote of South Carolina, or a portion of it, to a Tilden elector.

He said with regard to undertaking the business because there was great danger of bloodshed and anarchy in the State unless a peaceful solution of the question could be arranged, that the gentleman who spoke to him desired to have negotiations with the returning board, but could select no more suitable person than himself, because he had a personal acquaintance with all the members of the board, and his previous affiliations with the Republican party. I told Mr. Solomon that it was utterly useless for him to talk of any negotiations with the returning board, and that he should return to his home and wait for the result of the election.

Witness communicated his conversation with Governor Chamberlain next morning. He had determined to continue the conversation with Solomon to find out what the Democrats were doing, and to find out what Governor Chamberlain, so that if any occasion like the present arose and the intentions or purposes of the witnesses were questioned the Governor would be enabled to give the correct answer. He said that he had been called to the attention of the returning board on the 15th of November, and must necessarily have been called to the attention of the board, when Solomon started to go to Baltimore.

Q. Did you know of his starting to go to Baltimore?—A. I did.

Q. What did you know about it?—A. I knew Mr. Solomon had given these gentlemen to believe that he could obtain the vote of the majority of the returning board by the payment of a certain sum of money. I do not know what the sum was, but I believe it was \$100,000. I did not know what the sum was, but I believe it was \$100,000.

Q. In other words, you paid it to Florida gentlemen who reported to you—that expenses were necessary to send to certain places for the purpose of getting up affidavits and testimony?—A. That was what I did. I did not consult with Mr. Woolley or Mr. Marble about this at all.

Q. Can you tell me then, what Woolley and Marble were doing there?—A. Well, I can scarcely tell. I saw them at the Elbert House. They were not lawyers, and you never saw them in consultation with anybody?—A. I never did. I never knew Marble to be consulted about anything, and I never saw Woolley. As far as you know, and you cannot communicate about his mission, his purpose in going there at all?—A. No, sir.

Q. Here is a telegram from Marble, the translation of which reads: "You are infamously the result of being caused by disloyal counsel and neglecting to answer telegrams. I advise that you find one person to trust, and that person is me. I will stand in nobody's way, and do my best to transfer to him authority. About 100 majority and certified copies. Republicans claim same upon return. Home telegrams have been received. Harris and detectives always useless. Ditto Woolley. Here as in Louisiana—a nuisance and impediment. Trusted by nobody. I decline to communicate with him. I will stand in nobody's way, and do my best to transfer to him authority. About 100 majority and certified copies. Republicans claim same upon return. Home telegrams have been received. Harris and detectives always useless. Ditto Woolley. Here as in Louisiana—a nuisance and impediment. Trusted by nobody. I decline to communicate with him. I will stand in nobody's way, and do my best to transfer to him authority. 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